

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 6281

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, SP

SUBJECT: PRESS COMMENTS ON BASE NEGOTIATIONS

1. WE ARE REPORTING BELOW WHAT APPEARS TO BE SIGNIFICANT ARTICLE REGARDING FORTHCOMING BASE NEGOTIATIONS CARRIED IN SEPT 28 EDITION OF MADRID AFTERNOON DAILY "INFORMACIONES", PRESS ORGAN OCCASIONALLY USED BY GOS FOR CALCULATED LEAKS AND TRIAL BALLOONS. ARTICLE IS IN EFFECT NEWS ANALYSIS BY CORRESPONDENT VICENTE SALANER FOCUSSED ON MEETING BETWEEN AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY AND MFA FONMIN CORTINA LAST FRIDAY, SEP 28, AND APPEARS TO CONTAIN A NUMBER OF INTERESTING SPECULATIONS PROVIDED FROM SPANISH SIDE. HEADLINED "SPAIN DISPOSED TO OBTAIN TOTALLY NEW DEFENSE TREATY WITH USA", ANALYSIS MAKES SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT POINTS:
A. SPAIN'S OBJECTIVE IS TO SEEK COMPLETELY NEW DEFENSE AGREEMENT IN FORM OF TREATY. B. TREATY WOULD INCLUDE NEW DEFENSE AGREEMENT POSSIBLY BROADER IN SCOPE THAN THAT SPELLED OUT IN RECENT JOINT DECLARATION. C. SPANISH NOTE THAT U.S. PREFERENCE IS FOR RENEWAL OR EXPANSION OF CURRENT AGREEMENT. D. SPANISH ACKNOWLEDGE
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THAT NEW ACCORD MIGHT CAUSE SOME INTERNAL PROBLEMS IN U.S.

PARTICULARLY WITH CONGRESS, BUT BELIEVE U.S. NEGOTIATORS WILL BE ABLE TO OVERCOME "THEIR INTERNAL PROBLEMS." E. IN LATTER VEIN, SPANISH BELIEVE THAT DUE TO SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES "OBSERVED IN SPANISH POLITICAL LIFE" MORE FAVORABLE SENTIMENT NOW PREVAILING IN U.S. SENATE TOWARD APPROVAL OF NEW AGREEMENT IN TREATY FORM.

2. ARTICLE STATES "AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY, ACCORDING TO WELL INFORMED SOURCES, WANTED TO DISCUSS SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS IN MADRID AND COMPOSITION OF DELEGATIONS OF BOTH COUNTRIES. MINISTER CORTINA DID NOT ACCEDE TO THIS PRELIMINARY POINT, PREFERRING ONLY TO AGREE TO HOLDING FIRST SESSION IN MADRID EARLY OCT (SIC). IN THAT MEETING WILL BE DISCUSSED THESE PRELIMINARY POINTS. THE MINISTER, ACCORDING TO U.S. SOURCES, UNDERLINED NECESSITY OF CONSULTING WITH DIFFERENT SPANISH SECTORS -- MILITARY, ECONOMIC-CULTURAL -- AFFECTED BY THE NEGOTIATIONS AND WHICH WILL PARTICIPATE IN THEM."

3. "...FIRST AND VERY BRIEF CONTACT SERVES TO ILLUSTRATE WHAT SOME OBSERVERS CONSIDER AS CENTRAL THEME OF FORTH-COMING NEGOTIATIONS: CAREFUL AND METHODICAL ATTITUDE ON PART OF SPAIN, PROCEEDING TO ITS OBJECTIVE OF OBTAINING BROAD DEFENSE TREATY, TOTALLY NEW, AND NOT JUST A PROLONGATION OF THE "BASES AGREEMENT". AND AS FOR U.S., A PREFERENCE FOR RENEWAL OR BROADENING OF THE CURRENT AGREEMENTS."

4. " END OF COLD WAR AND ADVENT OF NEW MISSILE STRATEGY HAVE MODIFIED STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS APPLIED TWENTY YEARS AGO TO ESTABLISHMENT OF AIR AND NAVAL BASES. UNOFFICIAL SPANISH SOURCES THEREFORE UNDERScore IMPORTANCE OF AN AGREEMENT ADAPTED TO NEW INTERNATIONAL SITUATION. OTHER SOURCES ADD THAT SPAIN DESIRES TO OBTAIN NEW ACCORD WITH MUCH MORE PROFOUND IMPLICATIONS, AND WITH A SECURITY GUARANTEE ON PART OF U.S. PARALLEL TO DEFENSE RELATIONS EXISTING BETWEEN USA AND NATO, TO WHICH SPAIN DOES NOT BELONG. IT WILL BE QUESTION THEN, OF OBTAINING NEW DEFENSE TREATY SAME AS OR SUPERIOR IN SCOPE TO DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES..."

5. "SPANISH SOURCES AFFIRM THAT U.S. REPRESENTATIVES SHOWED THEMSELVES TO BE "RECEPTIVE" TO THIS ATTITUDE. HOWEVER, SHOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN THAT MCCLOSKEY FINDS HIMSELF BEFORE INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION -- PRODUCT IN PART OF MISTRUST AND OF NEW POWER
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WHICH WATERGATE AFFAIR HAS RENDERED TO CONGRESS -- WHICH MAY MAKE HIS TASK DIFFICULT."

6. ARTICLE PROCEEDS TO DESCRIBE COMPLICATED PROCEDURAL PATH TREATY MUST TAKE BEFORE SENATE, WITH OBSERVATION THAT ATTITUDES OF CONGRESSMEN TOWARD SPAIN HAVE CHANGED IN WASHINGTON OVER RECENT MONTHS "DUE TO SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES WHICH HAVE BEEN OBSERVED IN SPANISH POLITICAL LIFE TOWARD DEMOCRATIZATION."

7. ARTICLE BY FELIX ORTEGA IN SEPT 28 EDITION "ARRIBA" PROVIDED SIMILAR BUT LESS ELABORATE TREATMENT. REGARDING QUESTION OF STRATEGIC VALUE OF BASES (PARA 4 ABOVE), ORTEGA WAS NOT SO SUBTLE, STATING THAT BASES "ARE CONDEMNED". WITH EXCEPTION OF ROTA WHICH HE SAYS WILL BE USEFUL FIVE MORE YEARS UNTIL AMERICAN "SUPER-SUBMARINES" BECOME OPERATIONAL, THERE IS "NO DISPUTE" THAT BASES HAVE BECOME A SECONDARY CONSIDERATION ACKNOWLEDGED BY "BOTH SIDES".

8. COMMENT: ABOVE MAY WELL BE ACCURATE REPRESENTATION OF INITIAL SPANISH POSTURE AS WELL AS ATTITUDES PREVAILING AMONG TOP LEVEL POLICYMAKERS. FOR EXAMPLE, SPANISH NAVY MINISTER PITA DA VEIGA IN UNSOLICITED REMARK DURING CNO ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY'S COURTESY CALL SEPT 20 STATED U.S. SHOULD NOT TAKE HARD POSITION, THAT PEOPLE MORE SENSITIVE IN SPAIN THAN PREVIOUSLY, AND THAT POLITICAL CLIMATE HAS CHANGED SINCE LAST AGREEMENT WAS CONCLUDED. THIS IN CONSONANCE WITH WHAT WE HAVE BEEN TOLD ON OTHER LEVELS, I.E., FOCUS OF NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE "POLITICAL".

9. SPANISH CAUTIOUS AND METHODICAL APPROACH TO NEGOTIATIONS MENTIONED PARA 3 ABOVE MAY BE SOMEWHAT OVERBLOWN, HOWEVER. WORKING LEVEL OFFICIAL IN NAVY MINISTRY INFORMS US THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS PROVIDED NO GUIDANCE REGARDING PREPARATIONS, AND PLANNERS WITHIN HIS MINISTRY ARE PROCEEDING ON THEIR OWN, WITH NO COORDINATION AMONG DIFFERENT SERVICES THEMSELVES, OR BETWEEN THEM AND MFA. ONLY MEETING HELD WITH MFA TOOK PLACE EARLY SUMMER TO DISCUSS PREPARATION OF JOINT SPANISH U.S. DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.
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